

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A suture trimmer, the suture trimmer comprising:

a shaft having a proximal end and a distal end and an axis therebetween, the shaft having a wall defining a lumen extending from the proximal end [[toward]]to the distal end, the shaft having ~~a groove~~ and an opening formed through the wall and in a side thereof in close proximity to the distal end of the shaft and a groove formed through the wall of the shaft and, ~~the groove~~ extending from the distal end of the lumen toward the proximal end and communicating with the lumen distal the opening along the length of the groove, the groove also being in communication with the opening formed in the wall and in the side of the shaft, the opening being in communication ~~communicating~~ with the lumen~~[[,]]~~ and being ~~is~~ disposed proximal the distal end of the shaft and the groove and distal the proximal end of the shaft, and includes~~[[ing]]~~ a proximal edge;

a cutting member slidably disposed within the shaft, the cutting member having a distal end and a proximal end, the distal end having a lumen defined therein ~~and an opening in the side of the cutting member in communication with the lumen and disposed proximal the distal end of the cutting member, the opening in the side of the cutting member including a distal edge;~~

a suture retainer slidably disposed within the shaft and within the cutting member, the suture retainer having a suture protector in an exterior surface of the suture retainer, ~~the suture protector extending from a retainer distal end toward a retainer proximal end;~~ and

a handle disposed adjacent the proximal end of the shaft, the handle further includes independently operable first and second levers slidably received within the handle, the first lever operatively coupled to the suture retainer to move the suture retainer within the shaft and within the cutting member and the second lever operatively coupled to the cutting member to move the cutting member within the shaft and around the suture retainer to move the distal edge of the cutting member into proximity with the proximal edge of the opening formed in the side of the shaft to cut the suture, the second lever being transverse to the handle.

4. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 3, wherein the handle further includes at least one biasing member, the biasing member in communication with at least one of the cutting member and a suture retainer.

5. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 3, wherein the distal edge of the opening in the side of the cutting member is a sharpened edge.

6. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 5, wherein the sharpened edge of the cutting member is retracted within the shaft until withdrawn by applying a force to the second lever.

7. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 6, wherein a suture is disposed within the groove and opening by retracting the suture retainer within the shaft by applying a force to the first lever.

8-27. (Canceled).

28. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 3, wherein the first lever and the second lever are each movable with respect to the handle.

29. (Currently Amended) A suture trimmer, the suture trimmer comprising:

a shaft having a proximal end and a distal end and an axis therebetween, a bore defined by a wall of the shaft extends from the distal end toward the proximal end, the shaft having ~~a groove~~ and an opening formed in and through ~~[[a]]the~~ wall of the shaft in close proximity to the distal end of the shaft, ~~the and a groove formed through the wall of the shaft and~~ extending from the distal end ~~of the lumen~~ toward the proximal end and being in communication with the bore distal the opening along the length of the groove, the groove also being in communication with the opening formed in the side and wall of the shaft, the opening being in communication communicating with the bore, and being disposed proximal the distal end of the shaft and the groove and distal the proximal end of the shaft;

a fitting received within the bore of the distal end of the shaft, the fitting having a fixture fitting end, a fitting proximal end, and a fitting groove extending from the fitting distal end toward the fitting proximal end, the fitting groove and the groove being aligned when the fitting is received within the bore;

a cutting member slidably disposed within the shaft;

a suture retainer slidably disposed within the shaft and within the cutting member, the suture retainer having a suture protector in an exterior surface of the suture retainer, the suture protector including a channel defined in the exterior surface and extending from a retainer distal end toward a retainer proximal end; and

a handle disposed adjacent the proximal end of the shaft, the handle further including independently operable first and second levers slidably received within the handle, the first lever operatively coupled to the suture retainer to move the suture retainer within the shaft and within the cutting member and the second lever operatively coupled to the cutting member to move the cutting member within the shaft and around the suture retainer to cut the suture, the second lever being transverse to the handle.

30. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 29, wherein the handle further includes at least one biasing member, the biasing member in communication with at least one of the cutting member and a suture retainer.

31. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 29, wherein the opening has a proximal edge, the cutting member being adapted to engage the proximal edge to sever suture when suture is disposed through the groove and opening.

32. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 31, wherein the cutting member is retracted within the shaft until withdrawn by applying a force to the second lever.

33. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 32, wherein a suture is disposed within the groove and opening by retracting the suture retainer within the shaft by applying a force to the first lever.

34. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 29, wherein the cutting member has a proximally facing cutting edge.

35. (Previously Presented) The suture trimmer according to claim 29, wherein the first lever and the second lever are each movable with respect to the handle.